

December 2, 2009

STENEHJEM ANNOUNCES NEW PRESCRIPTION DRUG “TAKE BACK” PILOT PROGRAM

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem today announced a new Prescription Drug Take Back Pilot Program, which will begin operation in four cities across the state in December. He also will hold a “Take Back” day in Bismarck on December 8, 2009, and in Fargo on December 9, 2009, in conjunction with the Prescription Drug Abuse summit.

“We all have prescription drugs lying around the house because we don’t know how or where to dispose of them. We are told not to dump unwanted medications in the trash or down the sink, so we hold on to them. Unfortunately, prescription drugs from our medicine cabinets are making their way onto the streets and into our schools,” said Stenehjem.

Statistics from the just released 2009 Youth Risk Behavior Survey show that 15% of high school students and 6.3% of middle school students have illegally used prescription drugs at least once, and 5.6% of high school students have abused prescription drugs ten or more times. Drug task force agents report that prescription drugs are getting out of control in the state.

The Take Back program provides disposal units for people to dispose of their unused medications. The units, which are similar to the needle disposal containers in hospital rooms but on a much larger scale, will be located in the lobby of the police departments in Minot, Bismarck, Grand Forks and Fargo.

“Under the “Take Back” program, people will have a safe way to dispose of unused medications and stop them from ending up in our kids’ hands,” said Stenehjem. “I encourage everyone to drop off all unneeded medications they have been holding on to. Now is the time to get rid of them safely.”

Drug agents will be on hand to answer questions. The Take Back Day will be held between **12:00 noon and 5:30 PM** as follows:

- Tuesday, December 8, 2009, Radisson Hotel Lobby, 605 E. Broadway, Bismarck;
- Wednesday, December 9, 2009, Ramada Plaza Suites Lobby, 1635 42nd Street South (I-29 & I-94), Fargo.

The public is encouraged to bring unwanted prescription medicines for disposal.

###